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An APPEAL to the GOSPEL for the true Doctrine of
DIVINE PREDESTINATION, concorded with the Ortho-
dox Doctrine of GOD's FREE-GRACE, and MAN's
FREE-WILL.

By JOHN PLAIFERE, B. D.

[Continued from page 327.]

C H A P. IV.

The Transition to the third Part.

THUS have I spoken sparingly, and with reverence,
of these high things conceived by us as eternal, and
before all time. Next I am to declare the things
done in time, opening and revealing those eternal counsels;
which two parts I think good to unite, as it were, by a strong
joint set between them.

The creation of the world was the first act of GOD's
power, beginning to execute in time his counsel and decree,
which was from everlasting.

The world is that whole frame of GOD's building set up,
perfected, and furnished according to the model in the mind
and purpose of GOD, *who hath built all things*. In it
GOD made manifest the *invisible things of his wisdom and
goodness to his own glory*. Therein he hath made creatures
of sundry natures, motions, and perfections, to sundry ends.

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Above

Above others, he created man in a more excellent perfection, to a more excellent end: for he created him an image of himself, as far as was meet for a creature to partake of the Divine nature; which was, to be good, but mutable. This image or likeness to GOD was to be seen in three things; the first and second as man's perfections, the third as his end:

1. *In understanding and will.*
2. *In holiness and righteousness.*
3. *In immortality and blessedness.*

These three were subordinate one to the other; understanding and will to righteousness; righteousness to blessedness; blessedness to be the reward of righteousness, and righteousness to be the work of willingness; for virtue ariseth not from *necessity*, but *choice*.

The second act of execution in time of GOD's eternal counsel was, the government of man created; so as he might use his perfections, and attain his end.

In this government, GOD as the supreme Lord was to command, and man, as his creature and vassal, was to obey: but GOD being a free, and gracious Lord, and man not a brute, but a reasonable, and free servant, it pleased his Lord to descend, and come into covenant with him, as is used between party and party.

The sum of this covenant was, *Do this, and thou shalt live*; called therefore the *covenant of works*.

The law natural or moral, written in the heart of man, comprehended all the works which were to be done by him.

The law positive, namely, that of *abstaining from the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden of Eden*, was a trial of his obedience, and the exercise of the duties of the law moral in a particular.

To man appertained the observing of these laws: to GOD appertained the performance of the promise of life to man observing them, as being faithful in the covenant.

Adam was honoured with being the immediate workmanship of GOD, the possessor of Paradise, and partaker of the first

first covenant ; but he kept not the commandment. Being tempted by satan, he transgressed that one easy commandment, and so became guilty of all ; and losing his righteousness, he forfeited his happiness by sin, the breach of GOD's commandment and covenant.

The sin of man was voluntary, not necessary, though he sinned, being tempted by another ; for he had strength enough given him of GOD, and more was ready to have been supplied, if he had asked it, whereby he might have vanquished the tempter, and have stood firm in his obedience ; but he willingly consented, and yielded to the deceiver. Neither was this fall caused by GOD, though foreknown, but only permitted, when GOD, if he would, could have hindered it. And GOD permitted it.

1. Because he would not impeach the freedom of will, that he had given unto man. " He laid a kind of restraint," saith *Tertullian*, " upon his foreknowledge, and over-ruling power, by which he might have so interposed, that man should not, by abusing his freedom, have fallen into sin : for if he had so interposed, he had taken away that freedom of will, which in wisdom and goodness he had conferred upon him."

2. Because he saw it would offer him a fair occasion to manifest his wisdom and goodness still more graciously, than he had done in the creation.

3. Because GOD knew, that if man should fall, and he in mercy vouchsafe him a second covenant, it would offer him a just occasion both to be more thankful, and more wary. On which account, many more might be saved by a second covenant, made with man fallen, than would have been by the first, if *Adam* had stood, and the covenant of works had been held on with all his posterity : for natural perfections easily beget pride and confidence in ourselves, which is the first degree of aversion from GOD, and the beginning of ruin : but wants and weaknesses humble us, and make us fly to GOD, and cleave more close unto him.

That the fall of man was known before the decree of creation, the creation itself seemeth to shew, where there are

are infinite things prepared for man's use only as fallen, as all medicinal herbs prepared for physic: physic presumeth sickness, and sickness presumeth sin.

The effects of the fall of man are two-fold, *internal* and *external*.

The *internal* effect is that which is called *original sin*, comprehending both the loss of his original righteousness, and of his supernatural perfections, and also the decay of his very natural faculties; whence floweth a continual lust- ing after that which is evil, and a repugnance to that which is good. Man's heart, like a vitiated fountain, or degenerate tree, sends forth polluted streams and sour fruit.

The *external* effects of the fall are comprised in the curse of the ground, the subject of man's labour, which comprehendeth all the miseries of this life; and in the sentence of death, which includes both temporal and eternal death, and all the miseries of both.

The effects of the fall of *Adam* took place not only in himself, but in all his posterity; because GOD held him not as one person, but as the whole nature of mankind, until such time as he was come into that state, in which GOD thought it best to govern the race of mankind to the end of the world, namely, the state of sin and misery, needing grace and mercy.

The third act of the execution of GOD's eternal counsel was, the restoration of man fallen; for the most wise and mighty GOD, having created the world for man, and man for happiness in the fruition of himself, would not suffer either the whole destruction of his creature, or the frustrating of his end; though he was pleased to permit the depraving of his creature, and to forsake one ill-succeeding way, to take a better for the attainment of this end. Hence *Irenaeus*: "The whole ordering of salvation, touching man, " was wrought according to the good pleasure of the Father, so as GOD should not be overcome, nor his wisdom seem defective: for if man, who was made of GOD " to live, having lost life by being wounded by the serpent " which had corrupted him, should not again return to life, " but

"but he wholly swallowed up of death, GOD had been overcome, and the serpent's malice had conquered the will of GOD."

Hence GOD, that foreknew before all time the fall of man, had decreed in mercy to spare and preserve some degrees of his image in man, and to suspend the execution of some effects of his fall, that he might be a subject possible to be repaired, and capable of healing: and he did so, else man had died presently, or lived a mad and brutish creature. But GOD in wisdom and goodness chose not to destroy him absolutely, or wholly to make him anew. Moreover, out of the same wisdom and goodness he had decreed to supply another way that which was lost, and so bring man back from the gates of hell, and set him in a new and fair way to heaven.

This his thought from everlasting (*magnum cogitatum Patris*, as *Tertullian* calls it) was now revealed in due time, the time of man's misery, namely, soon after the fall: for this gospel in effect was preached unto him, that GOD would send his own Son made of a woman, that should destroy the works of the devil, and by death overcoming him that had the power of death, should deliver man from bondage, and restore unto him righteousness and life.

Now, what by the remains of GOD's image left in man, and what by the supply that GOD would make by his gracious help, miserable man fallen was reputed by GOD a fit person once again to be a party in a covenant; a covenant of new conditions suiting to the state of a sinner, but tending to the same ends, righteousness and life.

This new covenant is called the *covenant of grace*; first, because it was freely made with man a sinner, utterly unworthy to have any more communion with GOD: secondly, because in it the salvation of man is wrought in him rather by GOD than by himself, rather purchased by Christ than merited by himself, being more in receiving than in giving, in believing than in doing. Yet hath it the nature of a true covenant, both parties having something for either to perform; GOD, to send his Son and
his

his Spirit to relieve the wants and miseries of man, and to forgive sins, and to give life to such as obey his Son and his Spirit: Man's part is, to humble himself for his sins to GOD his Creator, to believe in Christ his Redeemer, and to yield himself to be led by the Holy Spirit his sanctifier. Acts xx.

21. This part of man, in the covenant, the whole gospel speaketh of, requiring repentance, faith, and new obedience. Here are two things affirmed, which may seem to require proof.

1. That the covenant of grace was made with all mankind.

2. That GOD supplieth by his Spirit whatsoever is needful to the keeping of this covenant, on the behalf of man, who is confessed to be impotent through his fall.

These two shall, by GOD's assistance, be sufficiently proved hereafter. Now let these suffice to observe,

1. That we find here, in the day of the first publishing of the covenant, all mankind in *Adam* and *Eve*, receiving the promise of the gospel, at the same time that they received their punishments, which we see are universal to all their seed. It is therefore certain, that *that* promise also should be taken as universal; since it is a maxim, that *favours are to be interpreted in the largest sense*.

2. That we find left, after the fall, the remains of some of the image of GOD, as life, understanding of good and evil, liberty of will in natural and civil things, conscience accusing or excusing, &c. which, though they were given at first by creation, and so belong to nature, yet the permitting of them to remain in man, after his fall, was of grace, both to make him capable to contract and covenant withal, and also to be some beginnings and principles in order to his restoration. But since these alone are not sufficient to make him able to rise again, or to recover righteousness, or keep the new covenant of the gospel, we cannot think but GOD, who doth nothing imperfectly, and who in covenanting is no hard master, would supply by his Spirit whatsoever was needful more to the keeping of that new covenant, whereupon depends the eternal woe, or the eternal

eternal happiness of the party covenanted with; seeing it is a true maxim, that *no body can be obliged to that which is impossible.*

The covenant of grace being once made with mankind, in the root of all men *Adam*, it pleased the goodness of GOD that made it, to preserve, continue, and keep it afoot, (and so he will do it to the end of the world) by proclaiming it from time to time, by renewing it often, and calling men to the knowledge thereof; otherwise it would long since have been forgotten, and utterly lost.

This is that act of GOD which is termed the heavenly calling, wherein his divine power giveth us all things that pertain to life and godliness, by the right use whereof men are brought to that high end, happiness: or by the neglect and abuse whereof, they fall into endless misery.

Hence St. *Paul*, speaking of the saints, as he had joined those two together, *whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate*; so he joineth these two together, *whom he did predestinate, them he also called*, by calling putting that into act, which he had seen and allowed in *predestinating*, in a successful course bringing them to glory. And St. *Jude*, speaking of ungodly men, saith, *they were before of old written to condemnation*, being such as turn the grace of GOD into lasciviousness, and deny GOD the only Lord, and our Lord *Jesus Christ*; whence the author to the *Hebrews* gives a good caveat, *Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us, of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it.*

This point having more connexion with the doctrine of predestination, hath more controversy: and therefore I must of necessity be more large in it, intreating the patience of some contrary-minded, who, in their writings, use a certain censorious, and magisterial severity, which I rather pray GOD to forgive, than purpose to return upon them.

Calling is the revelation and proclamation of the gospel, the covenant of grace, commanding repentance towards GOD, and faith towards the Lord *Jesus Christ*, and promising forgiveness of sins and life everlasting to all that obey.

It

It consisteth of two essential parts, *the outward preaching of the word*, whereto belong the sacraments, outward blessings and corrections; and *the inward operation of the Holy Spirit*, accompanying the outward means.

Calling hath been dispensed by the wisdom of GOD diversely, according to the diversity of times; *before Christ's coming*, under the Old Testament; *since Christ's coming* under the New. This diversity hath been seen in the *manner* of the outward means, in the *measure* of the inward operations of the Spirit, and in the *effects* suitable to both.

Under the Old Testament, the *bounds* were more narrow, the *word* more obscure, the *sacraments* more mysterious, the *Spirit* more sparing, and the *obedience* required more slender than under the New.

From *Adam* to the confusion of tongues, while the whole earth was of one language, the calling was universal, all men being within the hearing of the preachers of righteousness: after the division of tongues, men forsaking the religious fathers, GOD permitted them to walk in their own ways, and renewed his calling and covenant with *Abraham* and his seed, and so contracted the bounds of his church, that is, of the called.

Some great divines distinguish *calling* into two kinds; one *outward*, of the word only; another *inward*, of the Spirit joined with the word: the former, they say, is ineffectual; the latter, effectual: the one common to the reprobate, the other, special and peculiar to the elect: *that*, never obeyed with truth of heart; *this*, never disobeyed.

I approve not such a distinction, but compound one calling of the word and Spirit, as it were of a body and soul; supposing it to have in itself power to bring forth effect in all that are under it; and if it doth not so, the cause not to arise from the calling, but from the called that obey not. And to avoid mistakes, we are to remember,

1. That it must not be thought that the Spirit goeth with the word, to make the hearer perform that which we can do by natural strength; for the Spirit is given to help where nature faileth; and what men can do of their own strength,

GOD

GOD expecteth from them. One cause then, why the Spirit accompanieth not the word to many persons is, because they themselves though present hear it not, through their foolish carelessness.

2. That we are not to imagine, the concurrence of the word and Spirit is, as it were, natural, and inseparable, but depending on the will and good pleasure of GOD; and as grace is annexed to the sacraments, so is it to the word, only by divine institution and appointment.

But to return. Our Lord says, *The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and behold, a greater than Jonas is here.* Matt. xii. 41. If *Jonah* preached to the *Ninevites* without the Spirit, how did they repent? If *Jesus* preached without the same Spirit, how is he greater than *Jonah*? nay, how is he equal, in the power of preaching? If they that disobey, be not equally called with them that obey, how can these rise up in judgment against them? When their answer is ready, we had not the same calling with you; ours differed *toto genere* (entirely;) you were partakers of an heavenly calling, we but of an earthly; you were called by the voice of GOD speaking to your hearts; we, but by the bare voice of men speaking to the ear: if GOD had moved and excited us, as much as he did you, we would have done as well as you. That distinction of *calling* then, into outward and inward, effectual and ineffectual, is vain.

1. Because it giveth unworthily the name of *calling* to the bare outward preaching of the word, which may be a *commanding*, but not a *calling*; for seeing the word of the new covenant comes to call men to repentance and faith, for their recovery, after notice taken of their impotency to rise again of themselves, it seems an insulting mock, and not a call, to say to sinners, *turn, repent, believe, and live*, unless there be grace prepared for them, whereby they may be able to repent and believe.

2. Because it attributeth the effect of obeying the *calling* to the kind of *calling* itself, and only to one cause, that is,

the operation of the Spirit : as if many causes did not concur to produce an effect, any one of which failing, the effect faileth ; as if obedience to the *calling* of GOD, were not an act of the will of man, under the aid of the Spirit of GOD ; as if the aid of the Spirit was never refused, or the grace of GOD never received in vain : whereas though GOD be almighty, and able to draw all second causes to his side, he doth not use to disturb or cross the nature of causes, or the order of things which himself hath established.

3. Because it maketh GOD's covenant to differ from all covenants, even in that which is essential to a covenant. For in our covenants, each party hath something to perform, and no one party doth all in a covenant : but by this distinction, GOD is supposed both to provide infallibly to have the conditions fulfilled, and also to fulfil his own promises : whereas the term covenant is purposely borrowed from human transactions, to intimate to us a stipulation made betwixt GOD and us, whereby he promiseth his grace, and expects our obedience. And certain it is, that all that he undertaketh for us, is to make the conditions possible, and not to be wanting in his help, so far as is needful for us. Let none upbraid me then, that I am afraid to give too much to GOD, lest I should turn upon him, that he looks to be so much favoured, as to be tied to nothing. Truth flattereth neither GOD nor man ; * " 'Tis not the part of a good " and sound faith," says *Tertullian*, " so to refer all things " to GOD's will, and so to flatter every one by saying, no- " thing can come to pass without GOD's permission, that " we should imagine, ourselves are able to do nothing."

* *Tertul. de Exhort. Castitat. prop. Princip.*

[To be continued.]

GOD's

GOD's LOVE TO MANKIND. *Manifested by disproving
his Absolute Decree for their Damnation.*

[In a Letter to ———.]

SIR,

I HAVE sent you here the reasons which have moved me to change my opinion in some controversies of late debated between the Remonstrants and their opponents.

I the rather present them to you :

1. That I may shew the respect I bear you, with my forwardness to answer your desires.
2. That you may see I dissent not without cause, but have reason on my side.
3. That if I can be convinced, my grounds are insufficient, I may think better of the opinion which I have forsaken.

In delivering my motives,

1. I will state the opinion which I dislike.
2. I will lay down my reasons against it.

Touching the first, you know well,

1. That the main question in these controversies, and that on which the rest hang, is what the decrees of GOD are touching the everlasting condition of men.
2. That the men who have disputed these things, may be reduced to two sorts.

The first side affirmeth, that there is *an absolute and peremptory decree* proceeding from the alone pleasure of GOD, without any consideration of men's final impenitency and unbelief; by which GOD casteth men off from grace and glory, and shutteth up the far greater part (even of those that are called by the preaching of the gospel to repentance and salvation) under invincible and unavoidable sin and damnation.

The other side say, that *God's decree* of casting men off for ever, is grounded upon *the foresight of their continuance in sin and unbelief*, both avoidable by grace, and consequently inferring no man's damnation necessarily.

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The first side is divided, for

1. Some of them present man to GOD in the decree of *reprobation*, out of, or above the fall : and say,

That GOD of his mere pleasure, *antecedent* to all sin in the creature, *original* or *actual*, did decree to glorify his *sovereignty* and justice in the eternal rejection and damnation of the greatest part of mankind, as the end ; and in their unavoidable sin and impenitency, as the means. And this way go *Calvin*, *Beza*, *Zanchius*, *Piscator*, *Gomarus*, and some of our own countrymen.

2. The rest of that side fall down a little lower, and present man to GOD in his decree of reprobation, *lying in the fall*, and under the guilt of original sin, saying,

That GOD looking upon mankind lying in *Adam's* sin, decreed the greatest number of men (even those whom he calls to repentance and salvation by the preaching of the gospel) to hell-torments for ever, and without all remedy, for the declaration of his justice. This way went the synod.

The difference between them is not much, and even in their own account too small to cause a breach. Notwithstanding this petty difference therefore, they agree very well together, as we may see in the *Hague* conference and synod.

In the conference at the *Hague*, the Contra-remonstrants have these words : *As touching the diversity of opinions in this argument, viz. that GOD looked at man in this decree, not yet created, or created and fallen : because this belongs not to the foundation of this doctrine ; we bear with one another.*

After this in the synod at *Dort*, they permitted *Gomarus* to set down his judgment in the upper way. And the delegates of *South-Holland* were very indifferent which way they took : For these are their words ; *Whether GOD in choosing, considered men as fallen, or else as not fallen ; they think it is not necessary to be determined.* *Maccovius* also, professor of divinity at *Franeker*, one that undertook, in the very synod, to make good against *Lubbert*, his fellow-professor, that GOD did *will sin*, *ordain men to sin*, and would not at all, that all men be saved ; and besides this, openly and peremptorily affirmed, that *except these things were held and maintained*

tained by them, they could not possibly keep their own ground, but *must come over to the Remonstrants*.—This man was not only not censured, but publicly *declared* in the synod to be *pure and orthodox*.

By these instances it appears, that they of the first side can easily bear one with another in this difference. And (to say the truth) there is no reason why they should quarrel about circumstances, seeing they agree in the substance. For they both contend,

1. That the *moving cause* of reprobation is the alone will of GOD, and not the sin of man, original or actual.

2. That the final impenitency and damnation of reprobates are *necessary* and *unavoidable* by GOD's absolute decree.

These two things are the principal grievances that the other side stick at. So that these two paths meet at last in the same way.

Both these opinions I dislike.

My reasons why, are of two sorts :

1. Such as first made me question their truth.
2. Such as convince me of their untruth.

My reasons of the first sort respect both, and I will set them down against both, together.

My second sort of reasons I will divide, delivering some of them against the upper and more rigid way, others against the lower and more moderate way.

I begin with those reasons which first moved me to question the truth of absolute reprobation, as it is taught both ways.

They are these four which follow :

1. The *novelty* of this opinion. Absolute and inevitable reprobation hath no footing in antiquity. The upper way was never taught or approved by any of the fathers (even the stoutest defenders of grace against the *Pelagians*) for the space of 600 (I may say 800) years after *Christ*: nor the lower way till the time of *St. Austin*, which was about 400 years after *Christ*. The fathers in general agreed upon the contrary conclusion, and taught,

That

That it was *possible* for them to be saved, who in the event, were not saved; and to have repented, who repented not: and that there was no decree of GOD which did lay a *necessity* of perishing upon any son of *Adam*. This *Calvin* himself doth freely acknowledge, *this commonly-received opinion* (saith he, of a conditional respective decree) *is not the opinion only of common people, but hath great authors in all ages.* To the same effect also *Prosper* (St. *Austin's* follower) hath a remarkable speech: * *Almost all the ancients* (saith he) *did grant with one consent, that GOD decreed men's ends according to his foresight of their actions, and not otherwise.*

The truth of this may further appear by a few particular instances.

Minutius Felix brings in the pagans objecting to the christians, that they held the events of all things to be inevitable, and did feign to themselves an unjust GOD, who punished in men their unavoidable destinies, not their ill choice. He answereth, christians hold no other *fates* than GOD's decrees, who, *foreknowing all men and their actions, did accordingly determine their retributions.*

St. *Hierom*, an eager opposer of the *Pelagians*, in many places of his writings, saith the same thing. "The love "and hatred of GOD," (saith he) "ariseth from the foresight of future things, or from the works, otherwise we "know that GOD loveth all things, nor doth he hate any "thing that he hath made." And in his book against *Pelagius* he saith † *Eligit Deus quem bonum cernit, GOD chooseth whom he seeth to be good.*

The sum of all is this, that there is no decree of damning or saving men, but what is built upon GOD's foreknowledge of the evil and good actions of men. *Fulgentius* is plain for it too: *Those whom GOD foresaw, would die in sin, he decreed should live in endless punishment.* Even St. *Austin* and *Prosper* also many times let fall such speeches as cannot be reconciled with absolute reprobation.

I will

* *Prosper* in *Epist. ad Aug. prope finem.*

† *Lib. 3. contr. Pelag.*

I will only cite *Prosper* (for *St. Austin* speaks in him) who discoursing of some that fall away [*à sanctitate ad immunditiam*] from holiness to uncleanness, saith, they that fall away from holiness to uncleanness, lie not under a necessity of perishing, because they were not predestinate; but therefore they were not predestinate, because they were foreknown to be such by voluntary prevarication.

And again, in his answer to the twelfth objection, he hath these words: *GOD hath not withdrawn from any man ability to yield obedience, because he hath not predestinated him: but because he foresaw he would fall from obedience, therefore he hath not predestinated him.*

I will shut up my instances of that age, with the judgments of the council at *Arles*, in the year 490, or thereabout. Some of them were these: *Cursed be he that shall say, that the man that perisheth, might not have been saved: and again, Cursed be the man that shall say, that a vessel of dishonour may not rise to be a vessel of honour.*

A testimony or two I borrow likewise from some persons of note, and those *St. Austin's* followers too, who lived about 400 years after *St. Austin's* time. *Remigius*, the great patron of *Gottschalk*, the zealous preacher of absolute reprobation in those times, saith, *GOD layeth on no man a necessity of perishing, as he hath laid on none a necessity of sinning.* And a little after, *those whom GOD did foreknow, would live and die in their wickedness, he decreed should perish, as himself saith, Him which sinneth against me, even him will I blot out of my book.*

In the *Valentine* synod assembled in favour of *Gottschalk*, we may find these words: *The wicked perish, not because they could not, but because they would not, be good; and by their own fault, original or actual also, remained in the mass of perdition.* And in the end of their third canon, they denounce *anathema* to those that hold, that men are so predestinated to evil, as that they cannot be otherwise. *That any should be predestinated to evil by the power of GOD, so as he cannot be otherwise; we do not only not believe, but also if there be any that will believe so great an evil, with all detestation*

detestation we denounce them accursed, as the Arausican council also did. By these testimonies (which are but a few of many) it appeareth that absolute and inevitable reprobation found but cold entertainment from antiquity.

Considering this, I begin to call it into question.

For although I make not the decisions of the fathers or councils, the rules of my faith, (because they are but men, and therefore subject to error :) yet I honour their *grey hairs* and their *grave assemblies*, and vehemently mistrust those doctrines which they never taught or approved, but disliked and condemned.

2. My second reason for doubting of it, is its *unwillingness* to abide the *trial*. I find the authors and abettors of it have been very backward to bring it to the standard; not only when they have been called upon by their adversaries, to have it weighed, but when they have been intreated thereto by their chief magistrates, who might have compelled them : a shrewd argument that it is too light.

In the disputation at *Mompelgart*, anno 1586, held between *Beza* and *Jacobus Andrea*, with some seconds on both sides, *Beza* and his company having disputed with the *Lutherans* about the person of CHRIST and the Lord's supper, when they came to this point, declined the sifting of it, and gave this reason, that it could not be publicly disputed *of without the great scandal and hurt of the ignorant and unacquainted with these high mysteries.* The Contraremonstrants also in their conference with the opposite parties, at the *Hague*, in the year 1611, could not be drawn to dispute with them about this point, but delivered a petition to the states of *Holland*, and *West Friezland*, that they might not be urged to it, resolving rather to break off the conference, than to meddle with it.

In the synod likewise at *Dort*, in the years 1618 and 1619, the Remonstrants were warned by the president, *That they should rather dispute of the point of election, than the odious point of reprobation.*

Can this doctrine be a truth, and yet blush at the light, which maketh all things manifest? Especially considering these things :

1. That

1. That reprobation is a principal head of a divinity, by the well or ill stating of which the glory of GOD and the good of religion are much promoted or hindered.

2. That there is such a necessary connexion between the points of election and reprobation (both being parts of predestination) that the one cannot well be handled without the other.

3. That the doctrine of reprobation was the chief cause of all the uproar in the church at that time.

4. That it was accused openly of falsehood; and therefore bound in justice to purge itself of the charge.

5. That the Remonstrants did not desire that it should be talked of among the common people; but among the most judicious and learned.

This striving to lie close, is no infallible argument of a bad cause, yet it is a very probable one.

Truth, whether it be in men or doctrines, is best, when it is uncovered; it covets no corners, though error does, but is willing to abide the trial. As St. Paul saith of an heretic, he is *self-condemned*; so we may say of heresy and untruth; it condemneth itself, and by nothing more than by refusing the touch-stone.

My third reason for doubting of it is, its *affinity* with the old errors of the *Stoics* and *Manichees*.

The opinion of the *Stoics* was, that all actions and events were unavoidable, determined either by the revolutions of the heavens, or by the concatenation of natural things, and the disposition of the first matter, all things being so put together from eternity, that one thing must needs follow another, as it doth; and the first matter being so disposed, that things cannot successively come to pass otherwise than they do, but must of necessity be as they are, even [*invito Deo*] though GOD would have some things to be otherwise.

The *Manichees* held, that all men's actions, good or evil, were determined; good actions by a good GOD, who was the author of all good things that were created, and of all good actions that came to pass in the world; evil

actions by an evil god, who was *the prime author of all evil things or actions* that were in the world.

The maintainers of the absolute decree say one of these two things, either that all actions natural and moral, good and evil, and all events likewise, are absolutely necessary; so the Supralapsarians: or that all men's ends (at least) are unalterable by the power of their wills; so the Sublapsarians. And this is upon the matter all one with the former. For first, in vain is our freedom in the action and means, if the end at which they drive be determined. And secondly, the determination of the end necessarily involves the means that precede that end; as if a man be fore-determined to damnation, he must unavoidably sin, else he could not be damned.

Now in these three opinions, we may note two things:

1. The *substance* of them, which is an *unavoidableness* of men's actions and ends, whatsoever they be: in this all of them agree, all holding that in all things, at least in all men's ends, *undecidable fates* and insuperable necessity govern.

And therefore Melancthon doth not scruple to call this absolute decree [*Fatum stoicum, & tabulas parcarum*] *stoical fate, and the destinies' tables*.

2. We may note the *circumstance*, or the grounds of their opinions; the Stoics derive this necessity from the stars or the first matter; the Manichees from two *first principles of all these things, eternal and co-eternal*: these last, from the peremptory decree of Almighty GOD.

So that they differ in their grounds; but in this difference the Stoics and the Manichees have the better. For it is better to derive this necessity of sin and misery, from an evil god, or the course of nature, than from the decree of that GOD who is infinitely good.

For this reason alone, may this doctrine be suspected: because those dreams of the Stoics were exploded by the best philosophers of all sorts. And this of the Manichees was cried down by the fathers in general, not only as foolish, but as impious, not so much for any thing circumstantial

tial in it, as for the substance of the error; because it made all things and events necessary, and so plucked up the roots of virtue and vice, and left no place for just rewards or punishments.

[To be continued.] 10 112

Thoughts on ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION.

Extracted from Mr. LESLEY.

SOME men suppose, there is an irresistible decree already gone forth upon every man, of happiness or misery, which by no means that can be used will ever alter; that this decree has been from eternity, though secret to us; and therefore that all our labour, all our means, are perfectly in vain; that there is nothing to be done, but to fold our arms, and expect the issue of GOD's secret decree, which is already past; and therefore that it is no matter whether we obey the commands of GOD, or not; that they were given us to no end, as to our salvation, which does not depend upon them, but only upon the supposed decree. Thus has the arch-enemy blinded their eyes, and tied up their hands from the working towards their own salvation; and thrown them upon a fresh provocation of searching into GOD's secret counsels, which he has forbidden. *The secret things belong unto the Lord our GOD; but those things, which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we do all the words of this law.* Deut. xxix. 29.

What is revealed only, is the rule of our duty: why then do we search into those decrees, which we call secret? If GOD will have them secret, why will we not let them be secret?

He smote fifty thousand and seventy of the *Bethshemites* with a great slaughter, because they looked into his ark, (1 Sam. vi. 19.) *Who then is able to stand before this Lord GOD?*

GOD? And who dare pry into what he has reserved as a secret from us?

But this we may be sure of, that his commands, or his promises, cannot contradict his decrees, how secret soever; and therefore we ought diligently to obey his commands, and cheerfully to trust in his promises, without confounding ourselves about supposed decrees, of which we know nothing at all, nor ought to inquire.

I have read a story of a pious man, who was much troubled about his election or reprobation, and prayed earnestly that GOD would let him know, whether he was predestinated to salvation; and that a voice answered him, "What if you did know?" To which he replied, that "if he were sure to be saved in the end, how cheerfully could he despise all the allurements of flesh and blood, and with joy follow the commands of Christ, even to the death!" "Would you do all this," said the voice, "if you were sure to be saved?" Which he having faithfully promised, the voice answered once more, "Then do so and you shall be sure to be saved."

Whether the story be true or not, it is no matter; the moral of it does determine this question. This is the only way to make our *calling and election sure*. Let us work, and not dispute, not perplex ourselves about hidden decrees, but see to follow that which is plainly commanded; and then we may safely trust to what is promised, and *commit our souls to GOD in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator*. Let us look upon every thing, which weakens our hands in this, to be (as it truly is) the suggestion of the devil; and let us shake off that lethargy of glaring upon decrees, which we understand not, till it transforms us into stone, that we have neither courage nor power to move hand or foot towards heaven, but stand dozing upon that earth, which we find sinking and helpless; let it sink, and ourselves with it, even into hell, crying out, *What, can we help it; for we are decreed?* Yet never offer to move one foot from it! this is enchantment indeed, and a wonderful degree of it. It is like a man's head turning round upon a precipice, which makes
him

him run to meet his death. It is said, that a squirrel, having once fastened his eye upon that of a rattlesnake, has no power to look off him, but dancing from bough to bough with a fearful crying, leaps down at last upon the ground, and darts itself into his mouth. This is too like the condition of these men, whom nothing shall detain, whom no argument can persuade from their own ruin. The old serpent has caught them with the enchantment of his eye, and they are dancing themselves into his mouth. The eternal and secret decrees of GOD are a precipice, enough to turn the head of an angel : they veil their faces, and dare not pry into that infinite abyss. Yet poor man will not be content, unless he can fathom it ; and will leap into that gulph, though he is sure it must swallow him. Is there any thing in GOD, which we must not, cannot know ? Yes sure ; for nothing but infinite can comprehend infinite. And what is that which is hidden and inaccessible in GOD, if not his eternal and secret decrees ? And what can follow our pressing in upon these, but confusion and destruction to ourselves ? Especially when GOD has commanded that we should not press upon these, threatened us severely if we do, and has, for an example to us, poured out his vengeance, in a dreadful manner, upon the heads of those who would not be restrained from this unwarrantable and presumptuous curiosity of prying into his secrets.

But after all, what is the ground of these supposed hidden decrees of GOD, with which these men so unmeasurably perplex themselves ?

They are all founded upon the very weak reasonings of short-sighted men, concerning the foreknowledge of GOD ; which being certain and infallible, consequently they argue, that whatever he foresaw from eternity, must necessarily come to pass ; and that therefore it cannot be left to the liberty of our will to act otherwise, than exactly according to what GOD has foreseen ; else it would be in our power to defeat GOD's foreknowledge, and render it fallible. Hence they throw off all free-will, and make it inconsistent with the foreknowledge of GOD : and then again
from

from the certainty of GOD's foreknowledge, they infer that it is tantamount to a decree, or that GOD has from eternity decreed all those events, which he foresaw.

They say, that GOD is the same from and to eternity; that all things past, present, and to come, are present with GOD, who beholds all things with one intuitive act, without succession of time, which measures our actions here below; and therefore that all GOD's decrees are from eternity: and since he has decreed the reprobation of the wicked, and the election of the just, it must follow, that he has decreed it from eternity. And thence they infer, that such decrees being already past, they are irreversible, and cannot be altered by any thing that we can do; and therefore that it signifies nothing what we do, whether good or bad; for that our sentence is already pronounced, though we know it not.

That GOD having decreed to love the elect, he loves them, though in their grossest sins; and hates the reprobates, because he has so decreed, though in the most virtuous actions; that he loves them never the more for their good actions; nor is any whit the more displeased with the elect for their sins.

Now in answer to these fatal and diabolical suggestions, I would recal these men a little to consider of their own way of reasoning. For if there be no succession of time in GOD, if eternity is but one enduring instant; if therefore past, present, and to come, are all one with GOD; if all things are present to him; then it must follow, that foreknowledge and predestination are words only fitted to our capacities, who cannot apprehend duration without succession of time, which measures all duration to us. And there being no past or future in GOD, consequently, though he knows all things, yet he foreknows nothing; and though he has decreed, yet not pre-decreed: and there is no such thing as predestination in GOD; that is, not properly, and in the strictness of the thing, though the word is used in holy scripture, as many others are, only to comply with our weakness, who could understand nothing of GOD from words

words spoken of him strictly and properly, according to his incomprehensible nature. There are no such words among men, or intelligible to men; and therefore they must not argue strictly and philosophically from such words, more than from *GOD's coming down to see, whether men's sins were according to the cry of them, which had gone up to him, and the like.*

Now, there is no difficulty in GOD's knowledge, or decree, to say that he knows our sins, and decrees punishment to them, and the happiness of those that are good; for this is just, and what every one does allow. But all the objection is in the particle *fore*, or *pre*, *fore-knowledge*, or *predestination*; which being considered as before our actions, are supposed to lay a force upon them, and take away the freedom of our will.

But there being no such thing as *fore* or *after* in GOD, consequently our whole reasoning upon them is out of doors; and all the dreadful consequences, before-mentioned, are only chimeras of our own, proceeding all upon a wrong notion of GOD; while we endeavour to measure him by our own scantling, and argue from properties, which we must confess that we only suppose to be in him, but know at the same time, that they do not belong to him.

If it be said, that we cannot argue otherwise of these hidden things of GOD, which are not revealed to us; I grant it. But then the right consequence is, that we should let them alone; at least, since we cannot argue truly and properly of them, we should not draw consequences, as certain, from premises which are altogether uncertain. And where we confess that we cannot argue right, the best way is not to argue at all; especially where we are forbidden, and the effects of it are of such terrible consequences.

If any think, that I have criticised too nicely upon fore-knowledge and predestination, let them consider, that I have only repeated what the Predestinarians do urge on their side: they build upon that nicety, and thence infer GOD's eternal decrees. And I have shewn, that from the same nicety all their

their superstructure falls to the ground, having, by their own confession, but an imaginary foundation.

Come then, let us speak a little more plainly. Some cannot reconcile the certainty of GOD's knowledge with the freedom of our will; for, say they, "His knowledge is determinate, else were it not certain. And if he knows, that I will determine my choice to such an action, then can I not chuse any otherwise; which takes away the freedom of my choice."

I answer, that if GOD sees, that I will determine my choice so or so, and determine it freely, then I must determine it freely, and not necessarily, because he sees that I will do it freely, and not necessarily.

And his knowing what I do, does no more put any necessity upon me, than my seeing a man walk (supposing the utmost certainty of my senses) puts him under the necessity of walking. It is true, that if I see him walk, and my eyes do not deceive me, the consequence is certain, that he does walk. But none does infer from hence, that my seeing takes away the freedom of his will, or puts him under any necessity of walking.

GOD sees every thing act according to the nature, which he has given to it. Thus he sees the sun move, and a man walk; but he sees the one move necessarily, and not by choice, and the other walk by his own choice: and the knowledge of GOD is equally certain in both cases; therefore there is no necessity arises from the certainty of his knowledge.

And now I would desire these men to consider the consequences of their hypothesis. They would put it out of the power of GOD to make a creature with free-will, which would be to destroy the most glorious part of the creation, and the most signal and wonderful instance of the power and wisdom of GOD, in governing the wills of men, even in their full freedom. Without this, GOD could have no reasonable service paid him. There could be no rewards or punishments, because no choice, more than a stone falling down; no virtue, no sin, no wisdom or folly amongst men.

men. Then all the promises of GOD, his threatenings, and exhortations, even the coming of Christ in the flesh, his death and passion, were all to no purpose, were mere ban- ters upon mankind, if man have no choice, no free-will, to go to the right hand or to the left. *Have I any pleasure at all, that the wicked should die, saith the Lord GOD, and not that he should return from his ways, and live?* Ezek. xviii. 23. And, *Why will ye die, O house of Israel?* Why? Be- cause (they might say upon this scheme) thou hast decreed us to die; and we have no choice, no power to do any otherwise than we do.

It is as if I should bind a man hand and foot, lock him up in a house, then set fire to it, and ask him, "Why will you stay there, and be burned? As I live, I have no pleasure in your death," &c. This would be a mocking and in- sulting upon his misery.

This would be making GOD the author of all the sin in the world; for where there is no choice, there can be no sin: therefore those creatures, who have no choice, are in- capable of sin, as trees, stones, beasts, &c.

As there could be no sin against GOD, so there could be no offence against man. No man ought to be punished for murder, theft, robbery, &c. if he be carried to it by a fatal necessity, which he cannot resist. Therefore men distracted, or in fevers, are not liable to the law, because they are not supposed capable of the use of their reason, whereby they may govern their choice in their actions.

I may add, that there is nothing more self-evident, no, not the perception of our outward senses, than free-will in man. Who does not perceive, that it is in his power to do this or that? And all the repentance and regret in man for his follies, arises from this consideration, that he might have done otherwise. Without this, there could be no such thing as repentance, no, nor of counsel or advice, or indeed of any thinking at all: without this, man could not be a reasonable creature; for where there is no choice, there can be no reason, at least no use of our reason.

It is liberty and free-will, which confound all those atheists, who would reduce every thing, even GOD himself, to mere matter. For let matter be refined as far as imagination can stretch it, it can never come from under the law of necessity: all its motions are prescribed, and must proceed exactly according to its mechanism; and cannot vary in the least tittle. But the freedom of will, to act this way or the contrary, exceeds all rules of mechanism, and is an image of GOD, which cannot be impressed upon matter, and when the devil, or man by his instigation, would shrowd their sin under this seeming necessity, it is to throw it upon GOD. But their own consciences fly in their faces, and tell them that they might have helped it, and therefore that their sin lieth at their own door.

SERMON IX.

On JAMES iv. 4.

Ye Adulterers and Adulteresses, know ye not the friendship of the world is enmity with GOD? Whosoever therefore desireth to be a friend of the world, is an enemy of GOD.

1. **T**HERE is a passage in St. Paul's epistle to the Romans, which has been often supposed to be of the same import with this. *Be not conformed to this world*, ch. xii. v. 2. But it has little or no relation to it; it speaks of quite another thing. Indeed the supposed resemblance arises merely from the use of the word *world* in both places. This naturally leads us to think, that St. Paul means by *conformity to the world*, the same which St. James means by *friendship with the world*: whereas they are entirely different things, as the words are quite different, in the original: (for St. Paul's word is *αἰὼν*; St. James's is, *κόσμος*.) However the words of St. Paul contain an important direction to the children of GOD. As if he had said, Be not conformed

formed to either the wisdom, or the spirit, or the fashions of the age : of either the unconverted Jews, or heathens, among whom ye live. You are called to shew, by the whole tenor of your life and conversation, that you are renewed in the spirit of your mind, after the image of him who created you, and that your rule is, not the example or will of man, but the good, and acceptable, and perfect will of GOD.

2. But it is not strange, that St. James's caution against friendship with the world should be so little understood, even among christians. For I have not been able to learn that any author, ancient or modern, has wrote upon the subject: no, not (so far as I have observed) for sixteen or seventeen hundred years. Even that excellent writer Mr. Law, who has treated so well many other subjects, has not, in all his practical treatises, wrote one chapter upon it. No, nor said one word, that I remember, or given one caution against it. I never heard one sermon preached upon it, neither before the university or elsewhere. I never was in any company, where the conversation turned explicitly upon it, even for one hour.

3. Yet are there very few subjects of so deep importance; few that so nearly concern the very essence of religion, the life of GOD in the soul, the continuance and increase, or the decay, yea, extinction of it. From the want of instruction in this respect, the most melancholy consequences have followed. These indeed have not affected those who were still dead in trespasses and sins; but they have fallen heavy upon many of those, who were truly alive to GOD. They have affected many of those called *Methodists* in particular, perhaps more than any other people. For want of understanding this advice of the apostle, (I hope, rather than from any contempt of it) many among them are sick, spiritually sick, and many sleep, who were once thoroughly awakened. And it is well if they awake any more till their souls are required of them. It has appeared difficult to me, to account for what I have frequently observed: many who were once greatly alive to GOD, whose conversation was

was in heaven, who had their affections on things above, not on the things of the earth: though they walked in all the ordinances of GOD, though they still abounded in good works, and abstained from all known sin, yea, and from the appearance of evil; yet they gradually and insensibly decayed, (like *Jonah's* gourd, when the worm ate the root of it) insomuch, that they are less alive to GOD now, than they were ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. But it is easily accounted for, if we observe, that as they increased in goods, they increased in *friendship with the world*: which indeed must be the case, unless the mighty power of GOD interpose. But in the same proportion as they increase in this, the life of GOD in their soul decreased.

4. Is it strange that it should decrease, if those words are really founded on the oracles of GOD? *Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with GOD?* What is the meaning of these words? Let us seriously consider. And may GOD open the eyes of our understanding, that in spite of all the mist where-with the wisdom of the world would cover us, we may discern, what is the good and acceptable will of GOD.

5. Let us first consider, what is it which the apostle here means by the *world*? He does not here refer to this outward frame of things, termed in scripture, heaven and earth; but to the inhabitants of the earth, the children of men: or at least the greater part of them. But what part? This is fully determined both by our Lord himself, and by his beloved disciple. First, by our Lord himself. His words are, *If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me, before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. And all these things will they do unto you, because they know not him that sent me,* John xv. 18, and seq. You see here the world is placed on one side, and those who are not of the world on the other. They whom GOD has chosen out of the world, namely, by *sanctification of the Spirit*

rit and belief of the truth, are set in direct opposition to those, whom he hath not so chosen. Yet again, Those who know not him that sent me, saith our Lord, who know not GOD, they are *the world*.

6. Equally exprets are the words of the beloved disciple. *Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you: we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren*, 1 John iii. 13, 14. As if he had said, You must not expect any should love you, but those that have *passed from death unto life*. It follows, Those that are not passed from death unto life, that are not alive to GOD, are *the world*. The same we may learn from these words in the fifth chapter, ver. 19. *We know that we are of GOD, and all the whole world lieth in the wicked one*. Here *the world* plainly means, those that are not of GOD, and who consequently *lie in the wicked one*.

7. Those on the contrary *are of GOD*, who love GOD, or at least *fear him, and keep his commandments*. This is the lowest character of those that *are of GOD*, who are not properly sons, but servants: who *depart from evil*, and study to do good, and walk in all his ordinances, because they have the fear of GOD in their heart, and a sincere desire to please him. Fix in your heart this plain meaning of the term, *the world*, those who do not thus fear GOD. Let no man deceive you with vain words: it means neither more nor less than this.

8. But understanding the term in this sense, what kind of friendship may we have with *the world*? We may, we ought to love them as ourselves, (for they also are included in the word *neighbour*) to bear them real good-will, to desire their happiness as sincerely as we desire the happiness of our own souls: yea, we are in a sense to honour them: (seeing we are directed by the apostle to *honour all men*) as the creatures of GOD, nay, as immortal spirits, who are capable of knowing, of loving, and of enjoying him to all eternity. We are to honour them, as redeemed by his blood, who *tasted death for every man*. We are to bear them tender compassion, when we see them forsaking their

their own mercies, wandering from the path of life, and hastening to everlasting destruction. We are never willingly to grieve their spirits, or give them any pain: but, on the contrary, to give them all the pleasure we innocently can; seeing we are to *please all men for their good*. We are never to aggravate their faults; but willingly to allow all the good that is in them.

9. We may, and ought to speak to them on all occasions, in the most kind and obliging manner we can. We ought to speak no evil of them when they are absent, unless it be absolutely necessary; unless it be the only means we know, of preventing their doing hurt: otherwise we are to speak of them with all the respect we can, without transgressing the bounds of truth. We are to behave to them when present with all courtesy, shewing them all the regard we can, without countenancing them in sin. We ought to do them all the good that is in our power, all they are willing to receive from us: following herein the example of the universal friend, our Father which is in heaven: who till they will condescend to receive greater blessings, gives them such as they are willing to accept: *causing his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sending his rain on the just and on the unjust*.

10. But what kind of friendship is it which we may not have with the world? May we not converse with ungodly men at all? Ought we wholly to avoid their company? By no means: the contrary of this has been allowed already. If we were not to converse with them at all, *we must needs go out of the world*. Then we could not shew them those offices of kindness, which have been already mentioned. We may doubtless converse with them, first, on business, in the various purposes of this life, according to that station wherein the providence of GOD has placed us: secondly, when courtesy requests it: only we must take great care, not to carry it too far: thirdly, when we have a reasonable hope of doing them good. But here too we have an especial need of caution, and of much pray-

er: otherwise we may easily burn ourselves, in striving to pluck other brands out of the burning.

11. We may easily hurt our own souls, by sliding into a close attachment to any of them that know not GOD. This is the *friendship* which is *enmity with GOD*: we cannot be too jealous over ourselves, lest we fall into this deadly snare; lest we contract, or ever we are aware, a love of *complacence* or *delight* in them. Then only do we tread upon sure ground, when we can say with the psalmist, *All my delight is in the saints that are upon earth, and in such as excel in virtue.* We should have no *needless conversation* with them. It is our duty and our wisdom, to be no oftener, and no longer with them, than is strictly necessary. And during the whole time, we have need to remember and follow the example of him that said, *I kept my mouth as it were with a bridle, while the ungodly was in my sight.* We should enter into no sort of connexion with them farther than is absolutely necessary. When *Jehoshaphat* forgot this, and formed a connexion with *Ahab*, what was the consequence? He first lost his substance; *the ships they sent out were broken at Ezion-geber.* And when he was not content with this warning, as well as that of the prophet *Micaiah*, but would go up with him to *Ramoth-gilead*, he was on the point of losing his life.

12. Above all, we should tremble at the very thought of entering into a marriage-covenant, the closest of all others, with any person who does not love, or at least, fear GOD. This is the most horrid folly, the most deplorable madness, that a child of GOD can possibly plunge into: as it implies every sort of connexion with the ungodly, which a christian is bound in conscience to avoid. No wonder then it is so flatly forbidden of GOD: that the prohibition is so absolute and peremptory: *Be not unequally yoked with an unbeliever.* Nothing can be more express. Especially if we understand by the word *unbeliever*, one that is so far from being a believer in the gospel-sense, from being able to say, *The life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of GOD, who loved me and gave himself for me;* that he has not even the
faith

faith of a servant: he does not *fear GOD and work righteousness.*

13. But for what reason is the friendship of the world so absolutely prohibited? Why are we so strictly required to abstain from it? For two general reasons: first, because it is a sin in itself: secondly, because it is attended with most dreadful consequences.

First, It is a sin in itself: and indeed a sin of no common die. According to the oracles of GOD, *friendship with the world* is no less than spiritual adultery. All who are guilty of it are addressed by the Holy Ghost in those terms, *Ye adulterers and adulteresses.* It is plainly violating of our marriage-contract with GOD: by loving the creature more than the Creator. In flat contradiction to that kind command, *My son, give me thy heart.*

14. It is a sin of the most heinous nature, as not only implying ignorance of GOD, and forgetfulness of him, or inattention to him, but positive *enmity against GOD.* It is openly, palpably such. *Know ye not,* says the apostle, *can ye possibly be ignorant of this so plain, so undeniable a truth, that the friendship of the world is enmity against GOD?* Nay, and how terrible is the inference which he draws from hence? *Therefore whosoever will be a friend of the world* (the words properly rendered are, *Whosoever desireth to be a friend of the world,*) of the men who know not GOD, whether he attain it or no, *is, ipso facto,* (in the very attempt) *constituted an enemy of GOD.* This very desire, whether successful or not, gives him a right to that appellation.

15. And as it is a sin, a very heinous sin in itself, so it is attended with the most dreadful consequences. It frequently entangles men again in the commission of those sins from which *they were clean escaped.* It generally makes them *partakers of other men's sins,* even those which they do not commit themselves. It gradually abates their abhorrence and dread of sin in general, and thereby prepares them for falling an easy prey to any strong temptation. It lays them open to all those sins of omission, whereof their worldly acquaintance

quaintance are guilty. It insensibly lessens their exactness in private prayer, in family-duty, in fasting, in attending public service, and partaking of the Lord's supper. The indifference of those that are near them, with respect to all these, will gradually influence them: even if they say not one word, (which is hardly to be supposed) to recommend their own practice, yet their example speaks, and is many times of more force than any other language. By this example they are unavoidably betrayed, and almost continually, into unprofitable, yea, and uncharitable conversation, till they no longer *set a watch before their mouth, and keep the door of their lips*, till they can join in backbiting, tale-bearing and evil-speaking, without any check of conscience, having so frequently grieved the Holy Spirit of GOD, that he no longer reproves them for it: insomuch that their discourse is not now, as formerly, *seasoned with salt, and meet to minister grace to the hearers*.

16. But these are not all the deadly consequences that result from familiar intercourse with unholy men. It not only hinders them from ordering their conversation aright, but directly tends to corrupt the heart. It tends to create or increase in them, all that pride and self-sufficiency, all that fretfulness to resent: yea, every irregular passion and wrong disposition which are indulged by their companions. It gently leads them into habitual self-indulgence, and unwillingness to deny themselves; into unreadiness to bear or take up any cross; into a softness and delicacy; into evil shame, and the fear of man that brings numberless snares. It draws them back into the love of the world, into foolish and hurtful desires, into the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, till they are swallowed up in them. So that in the end, the last state of these men is far worse than the first.

17. If the children of GOD will connect themselves with the men of the world, though the latter should not endeavour to make them like themselves, (which is a supposition by no means to be made) yea, though they should neither design nor desire it; yet they will actually do it, whether

they design it, and whether they endeavour it, or no. I know not how to account for it, but it is a real fact, that their very spirit is infectious. While you are near them, you are apt to catch their spirit, whether they will or no. Many physicians have observed, that not only the plague, and putrid or malignant fevers, but almost every disease men are liable to, are more or less infectious. And undoubtedly so are all spiritual diseases : only with great variety. The infection is not so swiftly communicated by some as it is by others. In either case, the person already diseased, does not desire or design to infect another. The man who has the plague, does not desire or intend to communicate the distemper to you. But you are not therefore safe : so keep at a distance, or you will surely be infected. Does not experience shew, that the case is the same with the diseases of the mind ? Suppose the proud, the vain, the passionate, the wanton, do not desire or design to infect *you* with their own distempers ; yet it is best to keep at a distance from them : you are not safe if you come too near them. You will perceive (it is well if it be not too late) that their very breath is infectious. It has been lately discovered, that there is an atmosphere surrounding every human body ; which naturally affects every one that comes within the limits of it. Is there not something analogous to this, with regard to a human spirit ? If you continue long within their atmosphere (so to speak) you can hardly escape the being infected. The contagion spreads from soul to soul, as well as from body to body, even though the persons diseased do not intend or declare it. But can this reasonably be supposed ? Is it not a notorious truth, that men of the world (exceeding few excepted) eagerly desire to make their companions like themselves ? Yea, and use every means, with their utmost skill and industry, to accomplish their desire. Therefore fly for your life ! Do not play with the fire, but escape before the flames kindle upon you.

18. But how many are the pleas for *friendship with the world* ? And how strong are the temptations to it ? Such of these as are the most dangerous, and at the same time, most common, we will consider. To

To begin with one that is the most dangerous of all others, and at the same time by no means uncommon. "I grant," says one, "the person I am about to marry, is not a religious person. She does not make any pretensions to it. She has little thought about it. But she is a beautiful creature. She is extremely agreeable, and I think will make me a lovely companion.

This is a snare indeed! Perhaps one of the greatest that human nature is liable to. This is such a temptation as no power of man is able to overcome. Nothing less than the mighty power of GOD, can make a way for you to escape from it: And this can work a complete deliverance: his grace is sufficient for you. But not unless you are a worker together with him: not unless you deny yourself and take up your cross. And what you do, you must do at once! Nothing can be done by degrees. Whatever you do in this important case, must be done at one stroke. If it be done at all, you must at once cut off the right hand, and cast it from you! Here is no time for conferring with flesh and blood. At once, conquer or perish!

19. Let us turn the tables. Suppose a woman that loves GOD, is address'd by an agreeable man, genteel, lively, entertaining, suitable to her in all other respects, though not religious: what should she do in such a case? What she *should* do, if she believes the bible, is sufficiently clear. But what *can* she do? Is not this

"A test for human frailty too severe?"

Who is able to stand in such a trial? Who can resist such a temptation! None but one that holds fast the shield of faith, and earnestly cries to the strong for strength. None but one that gives herself to watching and prayer, and continues therein with all perseverance. If she does this, she will be a happy witness in the midst of an unbelieving world, that *as all things are possible with GOD, so all things are possible to her that believeth.*

20. But either a man or woman may ask, "What if the person who seeks my acquaintance, be a person of a strong natural

natural understanding, cultivated by various learning? May not I gain much useful knowledge by a familiar intercourse with him? May I not learn many things from him, and much improve my own understanding?" Undoubtedly you may improve your own understanding, and you may gain much knowledge. But still, if he has not at least the fear of GOD, your loss will be far greater than your gain. For you can hardly avoid decreasing in holiness as much as you increase in knowledge. And if you lose one degree of inward or outward holiness, all the knowledge you gain will be no equivalent.

21. "But his fine and strong understanding improved by education, is not his chief recommendation. He has more valuable qualifications than these: he is remarkably good humoured: he is of a compassionate, humane spirit, and has much generosity in his temper." On these very accounts, if he does not fear GOD, he is infinitely more dangerous. If you converse intimately with a person of this character, you will surely drink into his spirit. It is hardly possible for you to avoid stopping just where he stops. I have found nothing so difficult in all my life, as to converse with men of this kind (*good sort of men*, as they are commonly called) without being hurt by them. O beware of them! converse with them just as much as business requires, and no more! Otherwise, (though you do not feel any present harm yet) by slow and imperceptible degrees they will attach you again to earthly things, and damp the life of GOD in your soul.

22. It may be, the persons who are desirous of your acquaintance, though they are not experienced in religion, yet understand it well, so that you frequently reap advantage from their conversation. If this be really the case, (as I have known a few instances of the kind) it seems, you may converse with them only very sparingly and very cautiously. Otherwise you will lose more of your spiritual life, than all the knowledge you gain is worth.

23. "But the persons in question are useful to me, in carrying on my temporal business. Nay, on many occasions,

sions, they are necessary to me, so that I could not well carry it on without them." Instances of this kind frequently occur. And this is doubtless a sufficient reason for having some intercourse, perhaps frequently, with men that do not fear GOD. But even this is by no means a reason for your contracting an intimate acquaintance with them. And you need here take the utmost care, "lest even by that converse with them which is necessary, while your fortune in the world increases, the grace of GOD should decrease in your soul."

24. There may be one more plausible reason given for some intimacy with an unholy man. You may say, "I have been helpful to him. I have assisted him, when he was in trouble. And he remembered it with gratitude. He esteems and loves *me*, though he does not love GOD. Ought not I then to love *him*? Ought I not to return love for love? Do not even heathens and publicans so?" I answer, you should certainly return love for love; but it does not follow, that you should have any intimacy with him. That would be at the peril of your soul. Let your love give itself vent in constant and fervent prayer: wrestle with GOD for him. But let your love for him not carry you so far, as to weaken, if not destroy your own soul.

25. "But must I not be intimate with my relations? And that, whether they fear GOD or not? Has not his providence recommended these to me?" Undoubtedly it has: but there are relations, nearer or more distant. The nearest relations are husbands and wives. As these have taken each other for better for worse, they must make the best of each other; seeing as GOD has joined them together, none can put them asunder: unless in case of adultery; or when the life of one or the other is in imminent danger. Parents are almost as nearly connected with their children. You cannot part with them while they are young: it being your duty, to *train them up* with all care, *in the way wherein they should go*. How frequently you should converse with them when they are grown up, is to be determined by christian prudence. This also will determine, how long it is expedient

dient for children, if it be at their own choice, to remain with their parents. In general, if they do not fear GOD, you should leave them as soon as is convenient. But wherever you are, take care (if it be in your power) that they do not want the necessaries or conveniences of life. As for all other relations, even brothers or sisters, if they are of the world, you are under no obligation to be intimate with them: you may be civil and friendly at a distance.

26. But allowing that *the friendship of the world is enmity against GOD*, and consequently that it is the most excellent way, indeed the only way to heaven, to avoid all intimacy with worldly men; yet who has resolution to walk therein? Who ever of those that love or fear GOD? For these only are concerned in the present question. A few I have known who even in this respect were lights in a benighted land: who did not and would not either contract or continue any acquaintance, with persons of the most refined and improved understanding, and the most engaging tempers, merely because they were of the world, because they were not alive to GOD. Yea, though they were capable of improving them in knowledge, or of assisting them in business. Nay, though they admired and esteemed them for that very religion, which they did not themselves experience: a case one would hardly think possible, but of which there are many instances at this day. Familiar intercourse with these, they steadily and resolutely refrain from, for conscience-sake.

27. Go thou and do likewise, whosoever thou art, that art a child of GOD by faith. Whatever it cost, flee spiritual adultery. Have no friendship with the world. However tempted thereto by profit or pleasure, contract no intimacy with worldly-minded men. And if thou hast contracted any such already, break it off without delay. Yea, if thy ungodly friend be dear to thee as a right eye, or useful as a right hand, yet confer not with flesh and blood, but pluck out the right eye, cut off the right hand, and cast them from thee! It is not an indifferent thing. Thy life is at stake: eternal life, or eternal death. And
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is it not better to go into life, having one eye, or one hand, than having both, to be cast into hell-fire? When thou knewest no better, the times of ignorance GOD winked at. But now thine eyes are opened, now the light is come; walk in the light. Touch not pitch, lest thou be defiled. At all events, *keep thyself pure!*

28. But whatever others do, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, hear this, all ye that are called Methodists. However importuned or tempted thereto, have no friendship with the world. Look round, and see the melancholy effects it has produced among your brethren! How many of the mighty are fallen! How many have fallen by this very thing? They would take no warning: they *would* converse, and that intimately, with earthly-minded men, till "they measured back their steps to earth again!" O *come out from among them!* from all unholy men, however harmless they may appear; *and be ye separate:* at least so far as to have no intimacy with them. As your fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ; so let it be with those, and those only, who at least seek the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. So shall ye be in a peculiar sense, *my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

Wakefield, May 1, 1786.

*The JOURNAL of THOMAS COKE, Bishop of the
Methodist-Episcopal Church,*

From September 18, 1784, to June 3, 1785.

[Continued from page 346.]

SUNDAY, May 1—4. About twenty preachers met Mr. *Afbury* and me at brother *Mason's*. One night we all slept in one house; but it was so inconvenient to some of the preachers, that they afterwards divided themselves through the neighbouring plantations, by which we lost about

an

an hour in the mornings. A great many principal friends met us here to insist on a repeal of our slave-rules; but when they found that we had thoughts of withdrawing ourselves entirely from that circuit, on account of the violent spirit of some leading men, they drew in their horns, and sent us a very humble letter, entreating that preachers might be appointed for their circuit. We have increased about 200 in this division in the course of the last year. After mature consideration we formed a petition, a copy of which was given to every preacher, entreating the General Assembly of *Virginia* to pass a law for the immediate or gradual emancipation of all the slaves. It is to be signed by all the freeholders we can procure, and those I believe will not be few. Many of our friends, and some of the great men of the states, have been inciting us to apply for acts of incorporation, but I have discouraged it, and prevailed. We have a better staff to lean upon than any this world can afford. We can truly say, "The harvest is great, but the labourers are few."

Thursday 5. I took an affectionate farewell of my brethren: and on the 6th passed by the house of Mr. *Jarratt*, a violent assertor of the propriety and justice of negro-slavery. At noon I preached at *Whiteoak-chapel*, and lodged that night at the house of brother *Rees*, one of our local preachers, a friend of GOD and man.

On the 7th I preached at ten in the morning at brother *Spain's*, and at six in the evening at brother *Man's*. On Sunday the 8th, I preached at brother *Grange's* and brother *Finney's*. Brother *Finney* is one of our committee whom we have appointed to present our petition to the General Assembly. He is a good local preacher, and an honour to our connexion. On Monday the 9th, I preached at brothers *Briscoe's* and *Johnson's*; and on Tuesday the 10th, at brothers *Ogee's* and *Bransford's*. Brother *Ogee* is certainly a good man. On Wednesday 11th, I rode through heavy rains to a church in a forest, where I was engaged to preach. Every body told me that no one would come; that nobody would imagine that I would attend on such a day. And I found

found it true: so after being wetted to the skin, and the very linen in my saddle-bags being wetted, we rode (brother *Bowen*, the preacher who travelled with me through this circuit, and myself,) to the house of a kind Baptist, a physician.

Friday 13. I preached at *Bent-chapel*, belonging also to the church of *England*, to an attentive people. At night I lodged at the house of Mr. *Dillard*, a most hospitable man, and as kind to his negroes as if they were white servants. It was quite pleasing to see them so decently and comfortably clothed. And yet I could not beat into the head of that dear man, the evil of keeping them in slavery, although he has read Mr. *Wesley's* Thoughts on Slavery, (I think he said) *three times over*: but his good wife is strongly on our side.

Saturday and Sunday, 14th and 15th. I preached in a handsome church. On the Sunday I had a *very large* congregation. During sermon, immediately after I had spoken very pointedly on the subject, two dressy girls walked out with such an impudent air, that I rebuked them *heently*. After the public service, whilst I was administering the sacrament, baptizing, and meeting the society, their father, who is a colonel, raged at the outside of the church, declaring that as soon as I came out, he would horsewhip me for the indignity shewn to his family. But his two brothers (all unawakened) took my part, and insisted on it that I did my duty, and the young ladies deserved it. However, finding that our preaching in that church, which we do regularly, depends chiefly on him, I wrote a letter of apology to him, as far as the truth would admit me, when I came to my lodging.

Monday 16. I preached to a most polite congregation at *New-Glasgow*, and lodged at Mr. *Meredith's*. They gave me great attention. Mr. *Meredith* is a very sensible and very polite man. On Tuesday 17th, I preached in a court-house at noon, but in a very wicked neighbourhood. However, the congregation gave me their ear, while I endeavoured to shew them the necessity of the new-birth. At four in the afternoon I preached at one Mr. *Loving's*, a drunkard.

The preachers find this a convenient half-way house; so they take it in their way out of a kind of necessity. How strange it is, that so many will do any thing for the cause of religion, but part with their besetting sin! Here I was met by our brother *Hopkins*. He brought me that evening to his house, though it was rather dark before we reached it. Here I found myself locked up in the midst of mountains. So romantic a scene, I think, I never beheld. The wolves, I find, frequently come up to our friend's fences at night, howling in an awful way; and sometimes they seize upon a straying sheep. At a distance was the *Blue Ridge*, an amazing chain of mountains. I have been for a considerable time climbing up and descending the mountains. I prefer this country to any other part of *America*: it is so like *Wales*. And it is far more populous than I expected. On Wednesday the 18th, I preached at brother *Hopkins's* to a little, loving congregation, and administered the sacrament: and the Lord was with us.

Thursday 19. I preached to a quiet unawakened congregation at brother *Tandy Key's* who is lately come into that neighbourhood. He told me as we rode together, that he was determined to emancipate his slaves (about twenty.) I pushed on in the evening with an intention of reaching his father's Mr. *Martin Key's*: but at nine o'clock at night was glad to take up my lodgings at a tavern in a little town called *Charleville*; more especially as I had a dangerous river to cross, before I could get to Mr. *Key's*. Nor am I sorry I did not go there: for when I called there the next morning, I found he had shut his door against the preachers, because he had eighty slaves. For some years I think we preached at his house. His youngest son is a local preacher, and I believe will soon take a larger field. His eldest son is a child of Satan like himself, and therefore, I suppose, will have all his possessions when he dies. I drank a little milk here, (it being Friday) and before I went away, freed myself from the blood of the old man, which, I evidently perceived, not a little pleased his pious wife.

Friday 20. I preached at brother *Grimes's*, where I had many

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many drest people to hear me. And at five the next morning I had a very good congregation.

On Saturday 21, I preached at a chapel in a forest, which they call the *New-chapel*, and administered the sacrament, and was here met by our valuable friend, brother *Henry Fry*.

On Sunday 22, I preached &c. in Mr. *Fry*'s great room which he had built for a *ball-room*. But I think before he had used it even for one ball, the Lord caught hold of his heart and turned it into a preaching-room. He is a precious man.

Monday 23. After the falling of heavy rains I set off with one of the preachers for *Alexandria*. I this day met with many difficulties. In crossing the water in one place, that I might reach the bridge under which the main stream ran, the water was above the top of my boot. In another place, where we endeavoured to drive our horses over the run, (the bridge being broke) we were likely to lose our beasts, the stream being too strong for them, and carrying them down. At last we got them out, and with great labour and some danger patched up the broken bridge with the loose boards, and got over with our horses safe. After riding about forty miles, it grew so dark, and our horses and selves were so fatigued, that we lay at an inn on the road, though we were within five miles of our friend's house where we intended to lodge.

Tuesday 24. Having rained heavily the last night, we were entirely locked up by the waters. We got to our brother *Watson*'s, a local preacher, and he procured for me a little congregation.

On Wednesday 25, I set off again: and after many doubts, and, I confess, with trembling, I was prevailed upon to walk over a long pine-tree, which lay over a strong and deep stream of water, in which I must have been inevitably drowned if my foot had slipped. A man went before leading me by the hand. But here, as every where, the Lord was at my right-hand that I should not fall. On this day I crossed the very same run of water in the afternoon, where the awful scene happened, which, I trust, through the blessing

bleſſing of GOD, I ſhall never forget. We dined at a friend's houſe by the way, and reached brother Buſhby's at *Alexandria*, about ſeven in the evening. There I met, according to appointment, that dear, valuable man Mr. *Aſbury*. He had informed the people that when I arrived, the court-houſe bell ſhould ring, and about eight o'clock I had a very large congregation in the Presbyterian church, to whom I inſiſted on the neceſſity of the *witneſs of the Spirit*.

Thursday 26. Mr. *Aſbury* and I ſet off for his Excellency General *Washington's*. We were engaged to dine there the day before. General *Roberdeau*, an intimate acquaintance of General *Washington's*, who ſerved under him in the war, payed our way by a letter of recommendation. We lay at General *Roberdeau's* the night before, and he was to have gone with us; but Mrs. *Roberdeau* was ſo ill after lying in, that he did not chuſe to leave her. His excellency's ſeat is very elegant, built upon the great river *Potomac*; for the improvement of the navigation of which, he is carrying on jointly with the ſtate ſome amazing plans. He received us very politely, and was very open to acceſs; but he is quite the plain country-gentleman, and he is a friend of mankind. After dinner we deſired a private interview, and opened to him the grand buſineſs on which we came.

He aſked us to ſpend the evening and lodge at his houſe, but our engagement at *Annapolis* the following day, would not admit of it. I was loth to leave him, for I greatly love and eſteem him, and if there was no pride in it, would ſay that we are ſurely *kindred ſpirits*, formed in the ſame mould. O that my GOD would give him the witneſs of his Spirit! We returned that evening to *Alexandria*; where at eight o'clock, after the bell was rung, I had a very conſiderable congregation.

Friday 27. Mr. *Aſbury* and I rode to *Annapolis*, in the ſtate of *Maryland*, where the general-court (the ſupreme court of judicature of the ſtate) was ſitting. This prevented my preaching in the court-houſe: however I had a noble congregation in the play-houſe, and moſt of the great lawyers

to hear me. And surprizing! the fine ladies and gentlemen attended at five the next morning, so that I had one of the largest morning-congregations that I have had in *America*. We have had no regular preaching here yet, but I trust shall soon see good days. One lady was so desirous of my coming, that she sent word to Mr. *Asbury* that she would advance two guines for a carriage to bring me there from *Alexandria*: but that I did not accept of.

Saturday 28. We reached our kind friend Mr. *Gough's*, having spent a few hours in *Baltimore*, and travelled about fifty miles.

Sunday 29. I preached and administered the sacrament at the Falls-church, as it is called. It was the quarterly-meeting. We returned to Mr. *Gough's*, where I preached in the evening.

Monday 30. We rode to *Abingdon*, where we agreed to give Mr. *Dallam* £.60 sterling for four acres of ground, which we had fixed upon as the site of our college; and had proper bonds drawn up: we returned in the evening to Mr. *Gough's*.

Tuesday 31. We rode to *Baltimore*, where I endeavoured to shew the people the necessity of union with Christ.

Wednesday, June 1. We opened our conference, and were driven to the painful task of suspending a member, and he no less than an elder, a man who for ten years had retained an unblemished reputation. "Let him that most assuredly standeth, take heed lest he fall." As I expected to sail the next day, my brethren were so kind as to sit in conference till midnight. I endeavoured to shew them at noon the necessity of being faithful in the ministry of the word. We thought it prudent to suspend the minute concerning slavery for one year, on account of the great opposition that had been given to it, especially in the new circuits; but were agreeably informed that several of our friends in *Maryland*, in consequence of it, had already emancipated their slaves. But we agreed to present to the assembly of *Maryland*, through our friends, a petition for a general emancipation, signed by as many electors as we can procure,

procure, similar to that which we agreed to present to the *Virginia* assembly.

Thursday 2. I met my brethren early in the morning, and at eleven o'clock endeavoured to enforce St. Paul's awful exhortation to the elders of the church of *Ephesus*, Acts xx. After which we ordained five elders, brothers *Boyer*, *Tunnell*, *Pigman*, *Baxter* and *Foster*. The day before we ordained them deacons, as also brothers *Ringold* and *Michael Ellis*.

And now I took my leave of my friends, and set off in a boat for the ship *Olive-Branch*, which had sailed down the river the day before, and of which I got on board in the evening. In my younger days one of the greatest afflictions in life to me during the time it lasted, was to be torn away from friends whom I dearly loved. This, through the extensiveness of my acquaintance, and the constant change of my place of abode, and partly perhaps through the grace of GOD, has of late years considerably worn away. But I think for many years I have not felt myself so effeminate (shall I call it) as I did on parting with my *American* brethren, the preachers, and the sensation continued very painful for a considerable time after I left them.

Friday 3.—Sunday 12. All this time we have been sailing about 70 Leagues, and have been for several days locked up in a place called *Moxat-Bay*. However, this delay gave me an opportunity of writing about forty or fifty letters to my friends on the continent. There is no other passenger in the ship, so that I have the state-room always to myself, and the cabin most part of the day. It is a blessed opportunity for fellowship with GOD, and for the improvement of my mind. O that I may husband it accordingly! That I may return to *England* in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

[The end of Bishop Coke's Journal.]

POETRY.

Poetry.

COMMUNION *with GOD in Affliction.*

IN mercy, gracious Lord, thou dost chastise
 Thy froward children, when they go astray ;
 O Father, let me never more despise
 Thy rod, nor wander from the narrow way !

If in the furnace for a season tried,
 Shew forth in me thy love's almighty power :
 Or with thy servant in the flames abide !
 And give me patience in the trying hour.

When thoroughly purg'd, let me as gold refin'd
 Come forth, and shine before the fallen race :
 A chosen vessel for thyself design'd,
 To teach the world the lessons of thy grace.

O draw my heart from earth to things above,
 And let my soul be ever fix'd on thee :
 Give me the blessing of thy perfect love ;
 O let me here thy great salvation see !

Whate'er offends thine eyes I now resign,
 And cheerfully with all my idols part :
 O let my will for evermore incline
 To love and serve thee with an upright heart !

All worldly pomp and grandeur I despise,
 And look on earthly kings with pity down :
 My great ambition is in death to rise ;
 And wear above an everlasting crown.

O may I ever join the spotless band,
 Who, sav'd by grace, through tribulation came ;
 And round thy throne with saints and angels stand,
 To sing the praise of thy exalted name !

To

TO SILVIA, PENSIVE.

TELL me, *Silvia*, why the sigh
 Heaves your bosom? why the tear
 Steals unbidden from your eye?
 Tell me what you wish or fear?

Providence profusely kind,
 Whereso'er you turn your eyes,
 Bids you, with a grateful mind,
 View a thousand blessings rise.

Round you affluence spreads her stores,
 Young health sparkles in your eye,
 Tend'rest, kindest friends are yours,
 Tell me, *Silvia*, why you sigh?

'Tis, perhaps, some friendly voice
 Softly whispers to your mind,
 "Make not these alone your choice,
 "Heaven has blessings more refin'd.

"Thankful own what you enjoy;
 "But a changing world like this,
 "Where a thousand fears annoy,
 "Cannot give you perfect bliss.

"Perfect bliss resides above,
 "Far above yon' azure sky;
 "Bliss that merits all your love,
 "Merits every anxious sigh."

What like this, has earth to give?
 O my *Silvia*, in your breast
 Let the admonition live,
 Nor on earth desire to rest.

When your bosom breathes a sigh,
 Or your eye emits a tear,
 Let your wishes rise on high,
 Ardent rise to bliss sincere.

On GOD's everlasting Love.

FATHER, whose everlasting love
 Thy only Son for sinners gave,
 Whose grace to all did freely move,
 And sent him down a world to save :

Help us thy mercy to extol,
 Immense, unfathom'd, unconfin'd ;
 To praise the Lamb who died for all,
 The general Saviour of mankind.

Thy undistinguishing regard
 Was cast on *Adam's* fallen race :
 For all thou hast in Christ prepar'd
 Sufficient, sovereign, saving grace,

Jesus hath said, we all shall hope,
 Preventing grace for all is free :
 " And I, if I be lifted up,
 " I will draw all men unto me."

What soul those drawings never knew ?
 With whom hath not thy Spirit strove ?
 We all must own that GOD is true,
 We all may feel that GOD is love.

O all ye ends of earth, behold
 The bleeding, all-atoning Lamb !
 Look unto him for sinners sold,
 Look and be sav'd thro' Jesu's name.

Behold the Lamb of GOD, who takes
 The sins of all the world away !
 His pity no exception makes ;
 But all that *will* receive him, *may*.

A world he suffer'd to redeem ;
 For all he hath th' atonement made :
 For those that will not come to him
 The ransom of his life was paid.

Their Lord, unto his own he came ;
 His own were who receiv'd him not,
 Denied and trampled on his name
 And blood, by which themselves were bought.

Who under foot their Saviour trod,
 Expos'd afresh and crucified,
 Who trampled on the Son of GOD,
 For them, for them, their Saviour died.

For those who, at the judgment-day,
 On him they pierc'd shall look with pain ;
 The Lamb for every cast-away,
 For every soul of man, was slain.

Why then, thou Universal Love,
 Should any of thy grace despair ?
 To all, to all thy bowels move,
 But straiten'd in our own we are.

'Tis we, the wretched abjects we,
 Our blasphemies on thee translate ;
 We think that fury is in thee,
 Horribly think, that GOD is hate !

" Thou hast compell'd the lost to die,
 " Hast reprobated from thy face ;
 " Hast others sav'd, but them past by ;
 " Or mock'd with only * *damning grace*."

How long, thou jealous GOD ! how long
 Shall impious worms thy word disprove ?
 Thy justice stain, thy mercy wrong,
 Deny thy faithfulness and love ?

Still shall the hellish doctrine stand ?
 And thee for its dire author claim ?
 No—let it sink, at thy command,
 Down to the pit from whence it came.

Arise

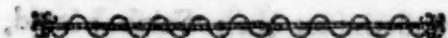
* More usually call'd, common grace,

Arise, O GOD maintain thy cause!

The fulness of the gentiles call:

Lift up the standard of thy cross,

And all shall own; Thou diedst for all.



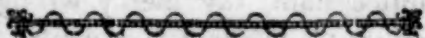
On the DEATH of a CHILD, five years of Age.

[By Phillis Wheatly, a negro.]

FROM dark abodes to fair ethereal light
Th' enraptur'd innocent has wing'd her flight;
On the kind bosom of eternal love
She finds unknown beatitude above.
This know, ye parents, nor her loss deplore,
She feels the iron-hand of pain no more;
The dispensations of unerring grace
Should turn your sorrows into grateful praise;
Let then no tears for her henceforward flow,
No more distress'd in our dark vale below.

Her morning-sun, which rose divinely bright,
Was quickly mantl'd with the gloom of night;
But hear in heaven's blest bowers your *Nancy* fair,
And learn to imitate her language there.

"Thou, Lord, whom I behold with glory crown'd,
By what sweet name, and in what tuneful sound
Wilt thou be prais'd? Seraphic powers are faint
Infinite love and majesty to paint.
To thee let all their grateful voices raise,
And saints and angels join their songs of praise."



The Name of JESU. Solomon's Song i. 3.

HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear?
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.

It

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
 And calms the troubled breast;
 'Tis manna to the hungry soul,
 And to the weary rest.

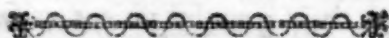
Dear name! the rock on which I build,
 My shield and hiding-place;
 My never-failing treas'ry fill'd
 With boundless stores of grace.

By thee my prayers acceptance gain,
 Although with sin defil'd;
 Satan accuses me in vain,
 And I am own'd a child.

Jesus my shepherd, husband, friend,
 My prophet, priest, and king;
 My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
 Accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
 And cold my warmest thought;
 But when I see thee as thou art,
 I'll praise thee as I ought.

Till then I would thy love proclaim
 With every fleeting breath:
 And may the music of thy name
 Refresh my soul in death.



ON ETERNITY.

CAN *Newton's* pupils tell, ere time be past,
 How many hours *eternity* will last?
 Can he who scann'd the holy city* say,
 When sets the SUN of an eternal day?
 Or can Jehovah, heav'n's omniscient King,
 Say when his holy angels cease to sing?

THE

* Rev. xxi. 15.